

2001: A SPACE
ODYSSEY

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BEGIN A NEW JOURNEY TO THE STARS-AND BEYOND!!

BASED ON
CONCEPTS FROM THE
MGM/STANLEY KUBRICK
PRODUCTION



2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY



PREMIERE
ISSUE!



STAN LEE PRESENTS:

2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY™

BASED ON CONCEPTS OF THE MGM MOVIE BY STANLEY KUBRICK AND ARTHUR C. CLARKE

EDITED, WRITTEN & DRAWN BY **JACK KIRBY** * INKED & LETTERED BY **MIKE ROYER** * COLORED BY **G. ROUSSOS** * CONSULTING EDITOR **ARCHIE GOODWIN**

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

SOMEWHERE IN THE DAWN OF TIME, WE BEGAN--
SOMEHOW, IN THESE PERILOUS TIMES WE KEEP
MOVING ON-- AND SOME TIME IN THE FUTURE,
SOMETHING WILL HAPPEN TO CHANGE US! THE
PROCESS OF CHANGE BEGAN EONS AGO WITH
A CREATURE CALLED--

BEAST-KILLER!



THE
MONOLITH
MAY BE THE
CAUSE!

IT DOES NOT
BELONG TO
THIS WORLD--
YET IT DOES
BELONG TO
US ALL!

READ ON-- AND
BEHOLD ITS
AWESOME
SECRETS!



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NEW ORLEANS

AS IT WAS IN THE GEOLOGICAL PERIOD KNOWN AS THE MIocene AGE. ANY EVIDENCE OF A GREAT CITY ON THIS SITE WILL BE LONG IN COMING!! HOWEVER, AT THIS MOMENT, THE NEO-MAN CALLED BY HIS FELLOWS "THE ONE WHO HUNTS ALONE," WAITS ON THE BRANCH OF A TREE, HIS NERVES TAUT, HIS CLUB POISED, HIS EYES RIVETED ON THE GAME BELOW, SEEKING, SELECTING THE ANIMAL HE WILL KILL...

THIS LAND ABOUNDS WITH GAME! IF I DO THIS WELL, I SHALL NOT RETURN IN HUNGER TO THE CAVE!

THE STONE SPIRIT ITSELF HAS TOLD ME THIS!



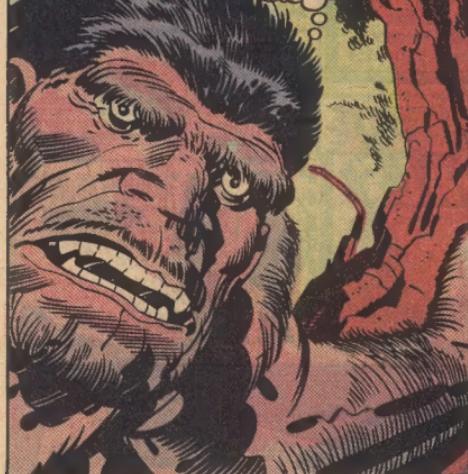
THE LONE HUNTER IS HUNGRY, BUT HE HAS IGNORED SMALLER GAME IN PURSUIT OF BIGGER, SWIFTER BEASTS... FOR THIS ANCESTOR OF MODERN MAN HAS ALREADY DEVELOPED A CUNNING AND PRIDE OF HIS OWN!

HE DOESN'T RUN WITH THE PACK THAT HUNTS AFLOAT! HE HAS VISIONS AND METHODS NOT COMMON TO HIS FELLOWS. IT IS THOUGHT THAT THIS HUNTER IS IN UNION WITH AN EVIL SPIRIT THAT LIVES IN STONE!!

THE OTHERS ARE NOT TO BE SEEN. IT IS GOOD!

YES, HE IS DIFFERENT THAN THE OTHERS. IT HAS COME TO HIM THAT ON THE GROUND THE GAME IS NOT ONLY SWIFTER BUT MORE DANGEROUS. PERCHED IN THIS TREE, HE CAN HOPE FOR A NEW ADVANTAGE THAT WILL AID HIM IN THE HUNT!

I HATE THE OTHERS. THEY SHUN THE STONE-SPRIT AND CANNOT HEAR ITS VOICE!



THE MOMENT COMES!! THE HUNTER LAUNCHES HIMSELF INTO SPACE AND UPON HIS STARTLED PREY!!

I MUST STRIKE NOW!!

PROCAMELLUS, WHOSE DESCENDANTS WOULD ONE DAY ADAPT TO THE PARCHED DESERTS, BOLTS IN TERROR AS THE HUNTER DROPS FROM ABOVE. FEAR DRIVES ITS LONG LEGS TO GREAT SPEED, BUT THE ATTACKER HANGS ON WITH SAVAGE DETERMINATION...



ELATION AND FEROCITY SIMULTANEOUSLY
FILL THE HUNTER AS HE CLUBS HIS
KILL TO THE GROUND. HIS HEADY
BELLOW OF TRIUMPH RISE
TOWARD A JOYOUS PEAK--
UNTIL THE SUDDEN APPEARANCE
OF OTHER HUNTERS...

SEE THIS! HE
HAS CAUGHT A
LONG-LEG!

HE IS
NOT
YOURS
ALONE!
WE
HUNGER
TOO!

THE PACK IS MET BY A RAGE WITH WHICH IT
CANNOT CONTEND! ONE AFTER ANOTHER
FALLS VICTIM TO THE BITE OF A FLAILING
CLUB...

BEGONE!

KRAKKO!

POWW!

LIKE A BULL MAMMOTH IN FULL CHARGE,
"THE ONE WHO HUNTS ALONE" BATTERS
HIS ADVERSARIES SENSELESS...

WAAM!

THEN, THE OTHERS FLEE!! THEIR BONES
ACHE, AND THEIR HEARTS QUAKE WITH
FEAR AS THEY ARE LITERALLY DRIVEN
FROM THE SCENE BY THIS
BELLOWING BROTHER
OF EVIL SPIRITS...

AARRR!

ONCE MORE, THE HUNTER TURNS TO HIS PREY, BUT, DESPITE ITS INJURIES, IT IS ALREADY ON ITS FEET AND SPEEDING FOR THE COVER OF THE FOREST. EACH STEP TAKES IT FURTHER OUT OF REACH OF THAT DEADLY CLUB...



GIVING CHASE ON FOOT PROVES FRUITLESS. THE PURSUER IS MORE UNGAINLY THAN THE PURSUED. THE HUNTER'S DINNER IS SOON LOST TO HIM. HE WILL HAVE TO CONTENT HIMSELF WITH SMALLER GAME...



THE LONE HUNTER DROPS THE PURSUIT. "I ATTACKED LIKE A BEAST FROM THE TREE," HE REFLECTS, "BUT I COULD NOT KILL SOON ENOUGH! NOT WITH THIS CLUB. IT CANNOT SINK TO THE VITALS AS DO A PREDATOR'S FANGS!!"



TIME AND AGAIN, HE'S SEEN THE FIERCE SABER-TOOTH DISPATCH HIS VICTIMS WITH HIS TUSK-LIKE TEETH. YES, THAT IS WHAT HE LACKS--THE IRRESISTIBLE KILL-POWER OF THOSE SHARP FANGS. IT IS TIME TO GO BACK AND CONSULT THE STONE!!



MEANWHILE, THE THWARTED PACK RUBS ITS WOUNDS AND GROANS IN DISMAY AT THE FURY OF THIS MAD ONE WHO HAS SET THEM ON THEIR HEELS. HE HAS INDEED BEEN GIVEN POWER BY A STONE SPIRIT, BUT HE KEEPS OTHERS FROM HIS CAVE SO THEY CANNOT BEHOLD IT...



WE MUST SEE THIS SPIRIT! WE MUST SEEK IT OUT--AND TAKE ITS POWER!

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

IT IS DECIDED TO FOLLOW THE LONE ONE. IT IS DECIDED TO OBSERVE THIS SPIRIT...

STALK HIM IN SILENCE. HE MUST NOT BE AWARE OF US.

WHEN WE TAKE THIS SPIRIT-POWER, WE SHALL KILL "THE ONE WHO HUNTS ALONE"!

THE PACK STEALTHILY PROCEEDS ACROSS THE PLAIN UNTIL THEY COME WITHIN SIGHT OF THE PLACE WHERE THIS HUNTER LIVES. THEN, THEY FEARFULLY PAUSE AND STARE. THE SUN IS LOW IN THE SKY, AND IT IS DIFFICULT TO DISCERN OBJECTS BEFORE THEM...

BUT SOON THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT AS TO WHAT ONE'S EYES BEHOLD! THE SPIRIT STONE TRULY EXISTS!! IT IS OF A SHAPE NEVER SEEN BEFORE! SURELY NO STONE HAS BEEN KNOWN TO STAND IN MID-AIR...

THE ALIEN MONOLITH DEFIES GRAVITY AND MAN'S UNDERSTANDING, BUT SOMEHOW IT MAKES SOUNDS -- AND COMMUNICATES WITH THE CREATURE IT HAS CHOSEN...

SEE! HE SPEAKS TO IT! BUT HOW DOES IT ANSWER?

IT IS SAID THAT ITS VOICE ENTERS HIS HEAD!

THE LONE HUNTER SHOWS COMPLETE FAITH IN THE THING. HE TREATS IT AS ONE DOES A COMPANION...

I KNOW NOW WHAT TO DO. I WILL MAKE A TOOTHY!

SOMEWHERE, IN HIS BRAIN, A THOUGHT IS STIMULATED. HE FINDS A DEAD TREE AND BREAKS OFF A SHORT, THICK BRANCH...



HE BEHRS FIRED BY HIS DEED, HIS EYES DART AMONG THE NEARBY STONES UNTIL HE PICKS ONE OF A SHAPE AND SHARPNESS HE DESIRES. THEN HE JAMS IT INTO THE BRANCH SHAFT...



WITH A STOUT VINE FROM A TREE, THE LONE HUNTER BINDS THE STONE TO ITS SHAFT. IT IS A CRUDE TOOL, BUT IT SATISFIES HIS NEEDS...



THIS ACTIVITY IS ALL TOO MYSTERIOUS FOR THE ONLOOKERS, YET, THEY WATCH IN WONDER, FOR THEY'VE NEVER SEEN ONE POSSESSED BY SO STRANGE A SPIRIT...



WHEN THE SABER-TOOTH SUDDENLY STRIDES INTO THE CLEARING, HIS ROAR BREAKS THE SPELL AND SENDS THE PACA SCAMPERING FOR SAFETY. HE IS HUNGRY, AND THE SCENT OF MAN IS STRONG...



SABER-TOOTH IS THE KING OF KILLERS. HIS ATTACK IS DEVASTATING, AND EVEN THE MAMMOTH IS NOT SAFE FROM HIS HUNGER. HE CUTS OFF THE LONER FROM ESCAPE AND LEAPS IN TO ADMINISTER QUICK DEATH...



BUT THE PREY DOES NOT FLEE. INSTEAD, IT MEETS THE ATTACK WITH A FEROCITY EQUAL TO THE SABER-TOOTH'S! THIS NIGHT'S MEAL HAS CHOSEN TO FIGHT BACK!!



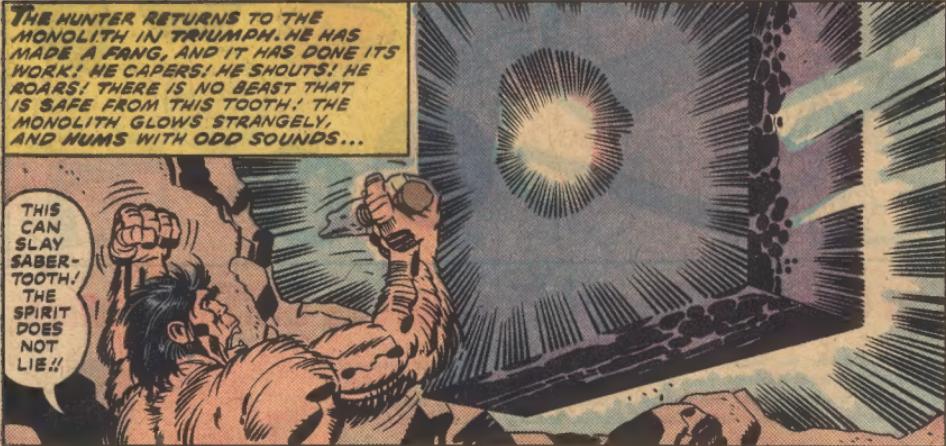
THE HUNTER'S ARM FLASHES HIGH, AND COMES DOWN WITH A DESPERATE STRENGTH. SABER-TOOTH ROARS TIME AND AGAIN, AS THE FIRST KNIFE PLUNGES DEEPLY INTO HIS HIDE...



WHEN THE SAVAGE STRUGGLE ENDS, IT IS SABER-TOOTH WHO DIES. HIS LIMP CARCASS IS CLUTCHED LIKE A TROPHY IN THE CURLED FIST OF THE HUNTER. HE HAS BEEN BEATEN BY A CREATURE HE HAS NEVER FEARED...



THE HUNTER RETURNS TO THE MONOLITH IN TRIUMPH. HE HAS MADE A FANG, AND IT HAS DONE ITS WORK! HE CAPERS! HE SHOUTS! HE ROARS! THERE IS NO BEAST THAT IS SAFE FROM THIS TOOTH. THE MONOLITH GLOWS STRANGELY, AND HUMS WITH ODD SOUNDS...



DOES THE STONE SPIRIT SCOFF? SURELY IT HAS SEEN WHAT THIS TOOTH HAS DONE!! CAN ANY BEAST ESCAPE ITS DEATH-BITE?



THIS TOOTH MUST REACH THE SWIFTEST BEAST ON WING OR FOOT! WHEN IT REACHES THEM WILL IT KILL? A LONGER BRANCH IS BROKEN... A LONGER SHAFT IS MADE...



HUNGER IS A NEVER ENDING CONDITION.
THE TIME TO HUNT COMES AGAIN.
THE NEO-MAN SEEKS OUT THE
FLEESTEST OF PREY. HE MUST
TEST THE TRUTH IN HIS
THOUGHTS...



THE SOFT, GRACEFUL ANIMALS BOUND FROM
HIS APPROACH LIKE THE RUSH OF WIND!!
HE SINGLES OUT A RUNNING TARGET AND
RAISES THE TOOTH!! IT IS NOW LONG AND
SLENDER AND BALANCES SMOOTHLY IN
HIS HAND. HIS MIND AND LUNGS
ROAR WITH THE TRUTH--"I WILL
REACH AND I WILL KILL!"



A NEW AGE BEGINS WITH THE FIRST
THROW OF A SPEAR!! THE ONE
SOON TO BE KNOWN AS "BEAST-
KILLER" TO THOSE WHO WATCH
AND EMULATE HIM, REPLACES
THE SABER-TOOTH AS THE
MOST FEARED ANIMAL ON
EARTH! HE WILL NOT ONLY
SURVIVE THROUGH TIME,
BUT HIS PROGENY WILL
DARE TO ROAM THE
VASTNESS OF SPACE!!



THE BRIDGE OF CENTURIES BEARS THIS
OUT. IN THE YEAR 2001, ASTRONAUT
WOODROW DECKER MAKES AN
IMPORTANT FIND ON AN
ASTEROID BETWEEN MARS
AND JUPITER!!!!



DECKER RAGES AT THE COLD STARS. THEY'VE BROUGHT HIM TRIUMPH ON AN OCCASION OF SUPREME TRAGEDY-- HIS DEATH!!

DECKER! ARE YOU MAD? THAT'S NO WAY TO HANDLE PRICELESS ARTIFACTS!!

WHY DON'T YOU SHUT UP, MASON! SHUT UP!

IN ANOTHER FEW HOURS, WE'LL BE AS DEAD AS THE BUILDERS OF THESE RUINS!

IT'S NO TIME TO LET YOUR NERVES DO YOUR THINKING, EITHER!

HAHAHAHA!! WHY DON'T YOU LAUGH, MASON? THIS IS A JOKE! A COSMIC JOKE!!

I'M NOT FREAKING OUT! I'M JUST ANGRY AT HITTING THE JACK-POT AT MY OWN FUNERAL, THAT'S ALL!!

BUT THE BALL GAME'S NOT OVER YET, MAN! WE'RE STILL ALIVE!

THE GAME WAS TO PROBE DEEP SPACE FOR SIGNS OF INTELLIGENT LIFE ON THE OUTER PLANETS. NOW, IT IS LIKE WINNING AFTER THE CROWD HAS GONE...

WE'RE MAROONED ON THIS ASTEROID, BUT IT'S NO REASON TO LOSE HOPE OF RESCUE.

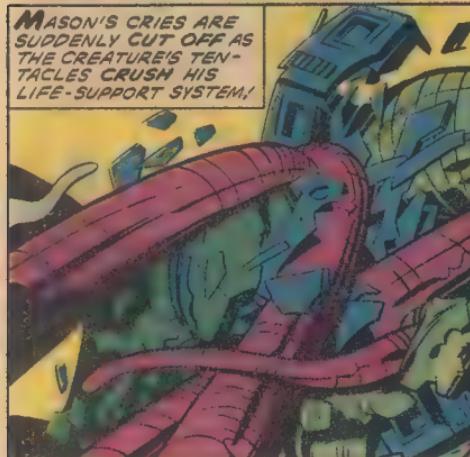
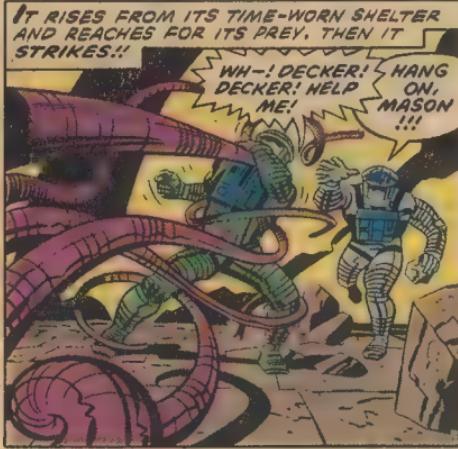
OH, YEAH? LOOK THERE, MASON! HOW'S THAT FOR A REASON? TRY STRINGING YOUR HOPES ON THAT!!

ON THE HORIZON, THEIR SHIP BURNS FURIOUSLY. WHEN THE FLAME HAS DIED, NO PART OF IT WILL BE INTACT AND USEABLE...

COMMUNICATIONS, SPARE OXYGEN, FOOD-- EVERYTHING NECESSARY FOR SURVIVAL IS TURNING INTO ASHES!!

STILL CONFIDENT, MASON?

YES! FLIGHT CONTROL KNOWS WE'RE MISSING! THEY WON'T LET US DOWN!



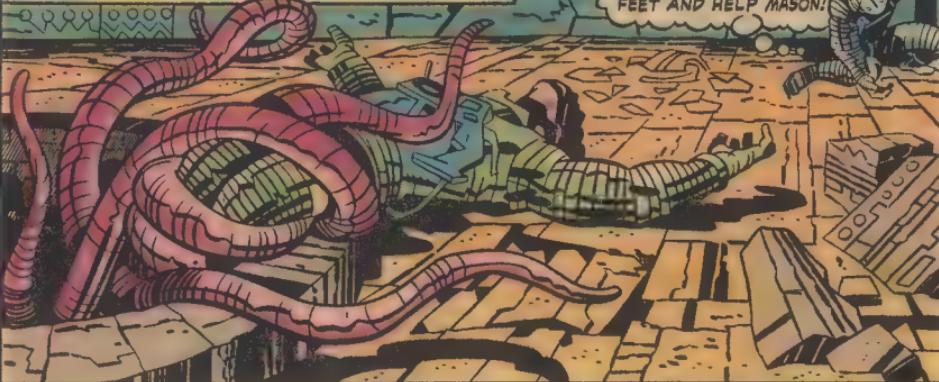
DECKER IS SEIZED BY PANIC AND TERROR! HE HAS A LAST GLIMPSE OF MASON IN THE GRIP OF THE MONSTROUS TENTACLES! DEATH HAS COME TO HIM SWIFTLY AND PAINFULLY--AND STAMPED HIS ASHEN FACE FOREVER WITH THE AGONY...



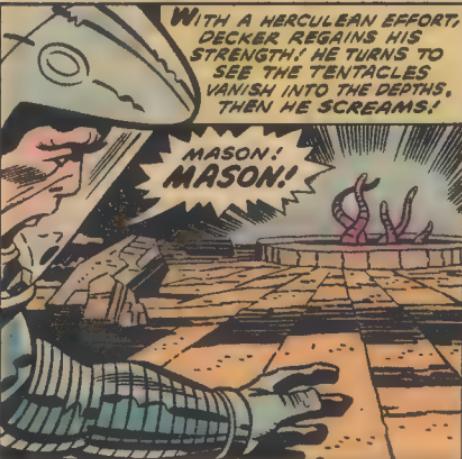
SUDDENLY, A TENTACLE LASHES OUT AND BLASTS DECKER WITH A NATURAL ENERGY-FORCE OF BONE-SHATTERING IMPACT!!



DECKER IS HURLED AGAINST A WALL AND IS STUNNED INTO IMMOBILITY. MERCIFULLY, HE CANNOT SEE THE FINAL ACT OF THE TRAGEDY!!!

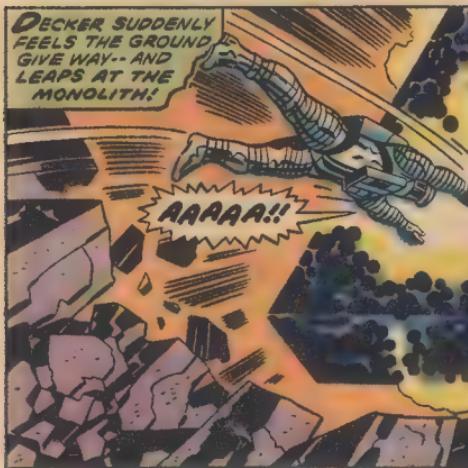
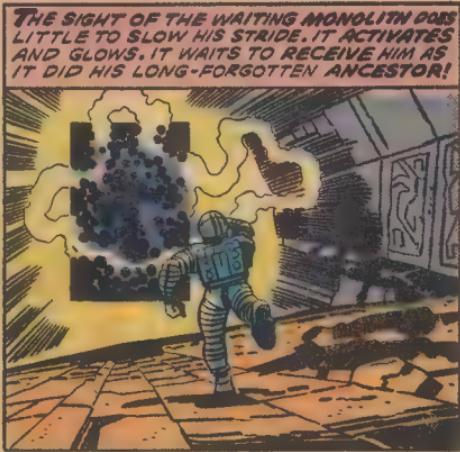


WITH A HERCULEAN EFFORT, DECKER REGAINS HIS STRENGTH! HE TURNS TO SEE THE TENTACLES VANISH INTO THE DEPTHS. THEN HE SCREAMS!



AS IF IN MOCKING RESPONSE TO HIS CRIES, THE RUIN TREMBLES AND SHUDDERS AND CRACKS APART!!

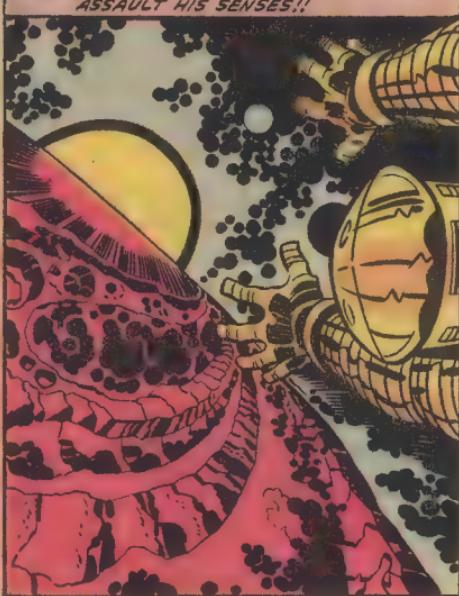




FOR WHAT IS THE MONOLITH BUT AN ALIEN INTELLIGENCE WHICH HAS CHOSEN MAN FOR AN EXPERIENCE BEYOND HIS KNOWLEDGE. DECKER IS WHIPPED INTO THE CRUCIAL STAGE OF THAT EXPERIENCE!



GONE IS THE ASTEROID AND ITS DANGERS! BORNE ON BEAMS OF COSMIC LIGHT, DECKER STREAKS THROUGH TIME AND SPACE... THROUGH GALAXIES AND ISLAND UNIVERSES, WHERE SIGHTS THAT STAGGER THE MIND ASSAULT HIS SENSES!!

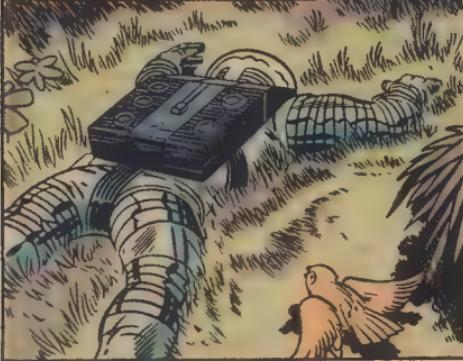


WORLD UPON WORLD--BIZARRE MAD-HOUSES, UNLEASHING THEIR ARMIES OF LIVING THINGS WHICH ONLY THOSE MEN CHOSEN BY THE MONOLITH WILL EVER SEE...



DECKER HIMSELF IS TRAUMATIZED BY THE VISUAL BATTERING OF THE SPECTACLE! IN HIS PRESENT FORM, HE CANNOT SURVIVE THE EXPERIENCE! DECKER MUST BE CHANGED!! AS "BEAST-KILLER" BECAME MAN, DECKER MUST BECOME SOMETHING ELSE!!

THUS, THE MONOLITH HAS PREPARED AN ENVIRONMENT. IT IS THE LAST STOP ON DECKER'S JOURNEY! IT IS MERELY A PLACE--A PLACE FOR WOODROW DECKER TO REST--AND CHANGE!



WHEN DECKER OPENS HIS EYES, A KIND, WARM SUN SOOTHES HIM WITH GENTLE RAYS. THERE IS THE SOUND OF BIRDS IN A BLUE SKY, AND THE COMFORTING SOFTNESS OF SWEET SMELLING GRASS BENEATH HIM...

WH--! WHAT IS THIS PLACE? HOW DID I GET HERE?



DECKER'S SPACE-SUIT HAS MYSTERIOUSLY VANISHED. HE INHALES CLEAR, FRESH AIR AND SLOWLY RISES. THEN HE SEES THE BOY...



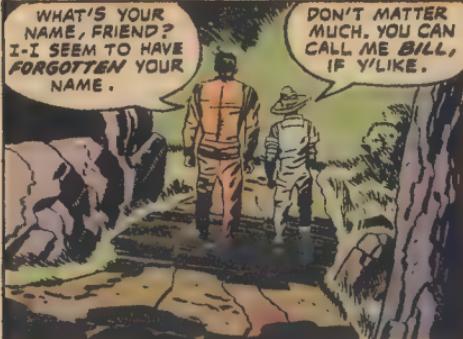
Y'SURE LIKE NAPPIN' ON THE GRASS, DON'TCHA, WOODY? IT'S GETTIN' LATE THOUGH... AND YOU'VE GOT A LONG HIKE BACK TO THE HOUSE.

YEAH. IT'S TIME I GOT GOING.

YOU KNOW, I HAVEN'T FELT THIS FINE IN AGES.



DECKER'S MEMORY OF PAST TERRORS HAS FADED. HIS MIND CLINGS TO WHAT HE SEES ABOUT HIM. HERE, HE CAN DREAM AND FEEL SECURE. HE TAKES TO THE ROAD PROVIDED BY THE MONOLITH--IN SPECIAL COMPANY CREATED FOR HIM!



THE ROAD IS LONG. IT TWISTS AND TURNS AND BECOMES AN UPWARD SLOPE. DECKER FEELS THE FAINT SIGNS OF FATIGUE--UNAWARE, HE IS NOT COVERING DISTANCE, BUT ACCELERATING HIS OWN AGING...



THE AGING PROCESS IS SWIFT. WOODROW DECKER WILL LIVE OUT THE REST OF HIS LIFE-TIME IN A MATTER OF MINUTES...

I-I'M SURE
GETTING BUSHED,
BILL. CAN'T--
UNDERSTAND IT.

LET'S GO,
WOODY, IT'S
LATE!
LATE!



THE MOMENT IS ALMOST AT HAND. THE ASTRONAUT IS A MAN OF SEVENTY AND AGING FASTER...

C-CAN'T
GO ON.
MUST--
REST--



IT IS TIME FOR THE CHANGE. THE PATIENT MONOLITH HAS WAITED TEN MILLION YEARS FOR DECKER TO SHED HIMSELF OF LIFE AND LEAVE HIS SHELL BEHIND AS MATERIAL FOR ANOTHER...



IT IS LATE INDEED. THE SUN IS SETTING AND THE BOY IS SOON LOST TO VIEW. DECKER IS ALONE--WEARY--OLDER...

I-I'M REALLY TIRED.
MY LEGS--
FEEL LIKE LEAD WEIGHTS!!

WHAT BEGAN WITH "BEAST-KILLER" CANNOT STOP. THE DESTINY SHAPED BY THE MONOLITH HAS TAKEN AGES TO COMPLETE. DECKER IS THE LAST STEP TO THE FORMING OF A NEW SEED!!



DECKER'S BODY SEEMS NO LONGER CAPABLE OF CONTINUING THE JOURNEY. IT SAGS. IT SLUMPS. IT SWAYS ON RUBBERY LIMBS...



DECKER'S LAST BREATH IS UPON HIS LIPS. THE MONOLITH APPEARS AS THE LIGHT FADES FROM HIS EYES...



AGE RAPIDLY OVERCOMES STABILITY. DECKER WILL NEVER SEE THE HOUSE THAT LIES AT THE END OF THE ROAD. FOR HIM, THE ROAD ENDS HERE, AT THIS VERY SPOT...



WHAT REMAINS OF DECKER STARES WITHOUT SEEING. IT FACES THE MONOLITH LIKE CLAY, AWAITING THE FIRST TOUCH OF REMODELLING!



THE TRANSFORMATION BEGINS,
ATOMS SHIFT, AND PLAY, AND
SING THEIR SONG OF
AGELESS TRIUMPH...



A WEB OF GOSSAMER TRANSPARENCY FORMS TO CONTAIN
WHAT TRANSPiRES WITHIN
ITS FOLDS...



DECKER IS GONE. IN HIS
PLACE IS SOMETHING THAT HE
COULD NEVER DESCRIBE, YET,
IT LIVES--TO CONTINUE A
JOURNEY NO MODERN MAN
COULD COMPLETE...



THUS, THE ENVIRONMENT
VANISHES. THERE IS NO
LONGER A NEED FOR IT. THE
NEW SEED EMERGES, WELL-
ADAPTED TO THE HOME IT IS
DESIGNED FOR--SPACE AND
TIME...



WHAT IS ITS PURPOSE?
WHAT IS ITS DESTINY?
THEY CAN NO MORE BE
DEFINED THAN THE ALIEN
MIND WHICH HAS MADE
ITS EXISTENCE POSSIBLE...



BUT, IT IS NOT THE FIRST
OF ITS KIND. THERE HAVE
BEEN OTHERS. THERE WILL
ALWAYS BE OTHERS, AS
LONG AS EARTH BREEDS
HUMAN LIFE...



IN A NEVER-ENDING UNIVERSE, THIS STRANGE, NEVER-
ENDING PROCESS CONTINUES. THE NEW SEED ANSWERS
THE CALL OF THE BECKONING COSMOS, AS THE MONO-
LITH WAITS FOR THE MATURING OF THE NEXT TO
COME...



NEXT...
**VIRA
THE
SHE-
DEMON**

MONOLITH MAIL

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THE NEW SEED

By and large, it is the creation of the New Seed which seems to be the basic, consistent thread running throughout the now-famous saga we call SPACE ODYSSEY. The New Seed, in effect, emerges as the triumphant character at the climax of this magazine. It is this enigmatic little rascal for whom all the fuss and fury of the ages is first stirred up, and then laid to rest in a final bow to the future.

But who is the New Seed? Or perhaps we should ask what is the New Seed? Is it man in transition? A testament to survival and continuance? Some fantastic projection of our ultimate destiny? Or is it the natural acceptance of what we expect to come after us?

None of these speculations may be correct, especially in view of the imposing appearance of that alien counterpart, the Monolith. That granite gremlin towers above these proceedings like an overpowering phantom, talking only to a chosen few when the destined time is at hand. It is the Monolith which is the fly in our ointment when it comes to nailing down our opinions of the New Seed.

For if there is an alien power shaping the course of our evolution through the Monolith, then it is doing so for purposes beyond our understanding. That power may well be injecting ingredients we're not aware of, changing a natural order to one of its own design.

Still, the Monolith is a fictional element in a very real process. I believe that it is this process which intrigues us. And it is this underlying thought which has made SPACE ODYSSEY such an immortal product in the cinema, in literature, and now—all willing—in comics.

"Now that we're here...where are we going?" That is the question posed by the Monolith, and it is a question which has enthralled man since the beginning. Indeed, next to the more basic question of our individual identities, this larger puzzle will continue to tease us to the end of our days. (And fortunately, it will remain a continuous boon to the workers of the editorial vineyards—us happy souls who make a living off of our abilities to involve you in the fantasies so necessary in providing the proper balance in your everyday joust with reality.)

Yes, the New Seed is the conquering hero in this latest Marvel drama. Why? Because he has staying power, that's why! He will always be there in the story's final moments to taunt us with the question we shall never answer. The little shaver is, perhaps, the embodiment of our own hopes in a world which daily makes us more than a bit uneasy about the future.

Today man is fouling the air. He is exterminating entire species of flora and fauna. The oceans smell of foul odors, and there are disturbing rumors that we are destroying the life cycle of the very sea creatures which have provided us with the necessities of existence.

It can all start with very small things—like plankton, the lowest form of life in the pecking order. Eliminate plankton, and a higher species dies out. That causes the extinction of an even higher life form, and another and another, until the whole chain disintegrates and leaves the oceans barren. It could happen. The world could go out with a whimper instead of a bang, and our every vision of the future could suddenly become highly academic.

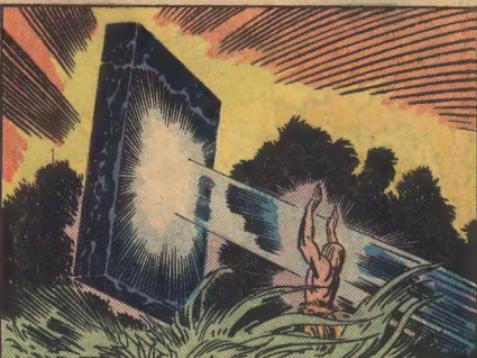
This is the point, however, where our cute little champion, the New Seed, comes to the rescue. In the meager space devoted to his appearance, he brightens our hopes considerably. He is a comforting visual—almost tangible—reminder that the future is not yet up for grabs. And wherever his journey takes him matters not one whit to this writer. The mere fact that the chances of his making it are still good is the comforting thought.

In short, the New Seed is no more than the spirit of our own self-belief, our own confidence in the stubborn rationale which has brought us from the caves to condominiums in the suburbs. Somehow, at the very edge of group destruction, history gives evidence of a persistent proclivity on the part of human beings for keeping mind—and whatever else matters—on an even keel.

The New Seed merely says that we can still do it. We can keep the environment and ourselves running into the distant future. We can, someday, knock off our hostilities and concentrate together on the great mystery of the stars.

But until that day arrives, my advice to the reader is not to break the fantasy-cycle. The excitement in store for you in Marvel's SPACE ODYSSEY will be heightened by an awesome array of characters that are guaranteed to freak-out the faithful fan. And in the vanguard will be the New Seed. For, it has been said of the converging cast... "A little squirt shall lead them!"

—Jack Kirby



HOWARD THE DUCK CAMPAIGN UPDATE FINAL....Time is short, and so is our space. There's just enough room allotted us for this item:

---**DUCK SUPPORT SWEEPS COUNTRY!** Pie Town, New Mexico (UDI) City Father Harley D. Farnsworth last week declared his full support of the Duck. Speaking before a gathering of the West Central New Mexico Chapter of the Sons of the Sagebrush, Mr. Farnsworth said, "It's about time that this country had a candidate that truly respects the public. There's not a man among us that Howard wouldn't look up to. I say let's put him on a pedestal, and look up to him for a change!"

---For further news on the campaign, on the *Official HTD Button* and related paraphernalia, be sure to catch the next HOWARD THE DUCK letters page. And don't forget to vote!

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